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THE METAPHYSICAL BASIS OF PLATO'S ETHICS. By Arthur Bernard Cook, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell & Co. London: George Bell & Son, 1895.

All students of ancient philosophy must welcome an attempt to explain the connection between the ethical and the metaphysical sides of the Platonic system. For Plato's metaphysics has plainly an ethical tendency, and, on the other hand, his view of man's life is plainly rooted in his view of the world's life. Anything that helps to clear up this question is of use, even though we may be forced to doubt whether the true point of connection has been rightly seized. Mr. Cook's work seems to err on the side of a too literal and serious interpretation of certain obscure sayings of Plato, much as do the systems erected by old-fashioned theologians on a few disconnected texts. And this seems to me the fundamental mistake of the whole school to which Mr. Cook belongs. That school has done a great service by insisting that Plato "does not talk nonsense" and "does not contradict himself." But it sometimes forgets that Plato was an artist and a humorist, and takes in dead earnest what he himself regarded as *παῖδι*. We have no right to turn literature into dogma like this. Plato was the least dogmatic of men, and the cosmology of his later dialogues, though it enables him to present his fundamental thoughts in a new way, is really on much the same level as the etymologies of the *Cratylus*. All the same, it is right and proper that these questions should be worked out, and Mr. Cook's labors are not in vain.

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SOCRATES AND ATHENIAN SOCIETY IN HIS DAY. By A. D. Godley. London: Seeley & Co., Limited, 1896.

The purpose of this little book is to give a picture of Socrates and his time for the benefit of the uninitiated reader. But for this we surely require a fairly full account of the different elements then fermenting in Athenian society,—the wild, brilliant dreams and theories, the reckless enjoyment, the sophistries of the self-seekers, whether men of words or men of action, the narrow-minded caution of the reactionaries, and the deeper effort of the real reformers. Among them all the figure of Socrates should stand out, a man with many of the limitations of his time, without